

GREENSBORO, N.C. Approved For Release 2004/10/13 : CIA-RDP88-01315R000300080026-6
NEWS

M - 83,477

S - 101,081
MAR 16 1976

Halperin Calls CIA A Threat

BY JACK BETTS
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A former Nixon Administration national security official suing his old bosses for tapping his telephone declared his indignation at the appearance of Central Intelligence Agency director George Bush's appearance here Sunday for Guilford County's Bicentennial Celebration.

Morton H. Halperin, who served as Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense and as a member of the National Security Council during the late sixties and early seventies, told a gathering of about 50 persons at City-County Governmental Plaza Monday that Bush's speech at Guilford Courthouse National Military Park Sunday to defend the CIA was an insult to the country's 200th birthday.

"I think it's important the people understand that the CIA has engaged in, and continues to engage in, actions that are illegal and unconstitutional, and our Bicentennial should mean the people are free to engage in free speech and political discussions without fear," Halperin

said in explaining his appearance.

Halperin's visit was sponsored by the North Carolina Civil Liberties Union, Inc., as a rebuttal to Bush, who was invited to speak by the Guilford County Bicentennial Commission.

Bush said Sunday that the CIA was "vital to freedom" because the agency provided the government information on the political and military characteristics of other countries.

But Halperin argued that the same agency represented a threat to freedom because of acts of espionage here and abroad, including kidnapping, wiretapping, mail surveillance and attempted political assassination.

Said Halperin, "I do not believe the United States should indulge in covert activities" here or abroad, regardless of whether other countries utilize them.

Now a director of an American Civil Liberties Union Foundation project on national security studies, Halperin is pressing a suit against former President Nixon and Secretary of State Henry Kis-

singer in connection with the wiretapping of his telephone for 21 months. Halperin believes Nixon and Kissinger ordered his phone tapped to determine whether he was the source of news leaks and whether he was loyal to the administration. Halperin's attorneys are provided by the ACLU.

Speaking for about 30 minutes to the sparse crowd under chilly, gray skies, Halperin declared his belief that the role of the CIA should be simply to collect and analyze intelligence information gathered by other agencies, such as the armed services and the state department.

That would prevent future abuses of the sort revealed by the Senate Intelligence Committee, Halperin said, but is markedly different from what the CIA has proposed.

He charged that President Ford's new CIA charter would authorize more "spying on American citizens" if the CIA determined that persons or groups constituted a threat to the CIA itself.

And, Halperin went on, "What the CIA proposes to do about revealing illegal acts of the CIA is to make it a crime" to do so. "We would never again learn of illegal and unconstitutional actions by the CIA unless someone were willing to break the law" to reveal it.

Rather than that, Halperin said, the country needs the opposite. "We ought to make it a crime for them to try to conceal illegal and unconstitutional acts," he said.

During a question-and-answer period, Halperin also said that while he was a National Security Council member he was unaware of any covert actions, foreign or domestic, because he was not privy to that information.

He said he had no plans to endorse a presidential candidate, and said his leaving government service was due to a "disagreement with working procedures" between him and Kissinger.

Halperin called Bush, the CIA's director for just six weeks, unsuitable for the job because of Bush's past political activities. He said a professional intelligence analyst should direct the CIA.

Halperin also charged that college professors under contract to the CIA routinely send names of students to the CIA as possible candidates to be CIA agents, a practice that Halperin said leads to surveillance of the students by CIA agents before the students become aware of the agency's interest.

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